

2012-2013 BOTSWANA COUNTRY GUIDELINES FOR U.S. FULBRIGHT SCHOLARS AND STUDENTS

The Fulbright Program is sponsored and administered by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) of the United States Department of State, and awards scholarships to lecture, conduct research, and study abroad. The program is managed in the country by the Public Affairs Section (PAS) at U.S. Embassy in Gaborone, Botswana.

This document contains **summary** information about the Fulbright award, logistical and program support provided through ECA, contact information for PAS or the U.S. Embassy, and advisory information about your host country. These guidelines are an important resource, and should be reviewed prior to departing for your host country. This document may be supplemented by PAS during your arrival orientation at post. Please note that this information is subject to change.

THE PUBLIC AFFAIRS SECTION OF THE U.S. EMBASSY IN BOTSWANA

The Public Affairs Section (PAS) is responsible for managing the Fulbright Program in Botswana. PAS offices are located at the U.S. Embassy compound, Government Enclave, in Gaborone. Embassy hours are 7:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Monday to Thursday, and 7:30 to 1:30 p.m. on Friday. The Embassy website is: gaborone.usembassy.gov

Public Affairs Officer, John Warner: WarnerJE@state.gov
Cultural Affairs Specialist, Naomi Makgolo: MakgoloNM@state.gov
Cultural Affairs Assistant, Neo Okaile: OkaileN@state.gov

PAS via Embassy switchboard: (011-267) 395-3982 ext. 2415/ 2422 / 2428/ 2468
PAS direct tel: (011-267) 395-7326
PAS fax: (011-267) 390-6129
Embassy after-hours number: (011-267) 395-7111

Note on communicating with PAS: Please direct your inquiries and other messages to both Ms. Makgolo and Ms. Okaile to ensure that you receive a prompt response. You are also welcome to include PAO John Warner on these messages; however, please make sure to copy his staff at all times to ensure a speedier response by either of the team members. Fulbright scholars/students in the U.S. may write to PAS at the following address:

Public Affairs Officer
2170 Gaborone Place
Dulles, VA 20189-2170

YOUR FULBRIGHT GRANT AND THE BINATIONAL NATURE OF THE PROGRAM

The Fulbright Program is administered in accordance with regulations established by the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board (FSB). The Board has ruled that Fulbright grant funds cannot duplicate benefits received under other auspices. Therefore, grantees who receive host government or host institution financial contributions (for example, international travel, per diem/ subsistence/ housing allowance) in cash or kind do not receive allowances for these grant benefits. Grantees who receive a concurrent grant to the same country under other auspices may have their Fulbright grants reduced if Fulbright grant benefits are duplicated by the other grant.

Host country governments and institutions support the exchange program through two ways: (a) *monetary contributions*, which result in a sharing of program costs, or (b) *non-monetary assistance* to enhance the exchange experience for the guest scholar.

WHAT THE FULBRIGHT GRANT PROVIDES

For Student Grantees

Fulbright student grants have two components: (1) a base amount and (2) monthly maintenance allowance. Additional funds may be included in your grant as allowances and are described separately. Grant benefits authorized by ECA are paid in U.S. dollars through the Institute of International Education (IIE).

1. The **base amount** is provided to cover initial or one-time start-up expenses such as:
 - a. Unaccompanied and/or Excess Baggage
 - b. Miscellaneous Costs, such as visa fees, permits, medical exams, immunizations, etc.This is a fixed sum in each grant and may not reimburse all expenses completely.
2. A monthly **maintenance allowance** is provided to cover recurring subsistence needs such as housing, fuel, utilities, and food. The maintenance allowance is based upon the estimated cost of maintaining a modest standard of living in the country of assignment.

For Scholar Grantees

Fulbright senior scholar grants have three components: (1) travel and relocation, (2) monthly maintenance, and (3) monthly stipend. Additional funds may be included in your grant as special allowances and are described separately. Grant benefits are based upon the estimated cost of maintaining a modest standard of living in the country of assignment. Benefits are not intended to duplicate U.S. salary levels or the standard of living of U.S. diplomatic personnel. Grant benefits authorized by ECA are paid in U.S. dollars through the Council for International Exchange of Scholars (CIES).

1. Travel and Relocation
 - a. Unaccompanied and/or Excess Baggage
 - b. Relocation Allowance for expenses such as visa fees, permits, medical exams, immunizations, etc. This is a fixed sum in each grant and may not reimburse all expenses

completely.

2. A monthly **maintenance allowance** is provided to cover recurring subsistence needs such as housing, fuel, utilities, and food.

3. Monthly **base stipend**

PRIOR TO YOUR ARRIVAL

Travel to Botswana

Grantee air travel is coordinated by the travel agency, HRG Worldwide, which will bill IIE or CIES directly for the costs of your tickets. HRG staff will assist you with your reservation and then send your reservation to IIE or CIES for approval. You must book a round-trip ticket with a return date that corresponds to the grant end date. All air travel and all air shipments paid for with United States Government funds must conform to the Fly America Act, which requires that all such travel and shipments be on “U.S. flag” airlines where such service is available.

Visas and Residence/Work/Research Permits

Grantees should take copies of all identification certificates and documents, including marriage and birth certificates, driver’s licenses, etc., to your assignment country. Make photocopies of the first two pages of your passport, which should be kept separate from your passport in case of loss or theft. Also bring extra passport photos for obtaining visas and conducting other business.

Visas

The Government of Botswana (GOB) does not require a visa for U.S. citizens for stays up to 90 days. The Immigration Service of the Government of Botswana may choose to issue a visa for thirty or ninety days to U.S. citizens at the port of entry. If the visa obtained is for thirty days, it can be renewed at the Immigration Service as a matter of routine. However, obtaining extended visas and residence permits is more difficult. The University of Botswana makes arrangements for extended visas, residence and work permits, and exemption certificates for Fulbright lecturers assigned to the University. Lecturers are advised to have a copy of the letter of offer from the University on hand upon arrival at the airport.

Exemption certificates allow the Fulbright lecturer to work at the university, leave and re-enter Botswana, and visit Botswana National Parks without cost. For this application, a Fulbrighter will need to provide passport photographs and a copy of a marriage certificate if accompanied by a spouse.

Researchers and students make their own arrangements for extended visas and work and residence permits upon presentation of a research permit issued by the Government of Botswana Ministry of Labour and Home Affairs. In order to obtain a residence permit, a researcher or student is required to meet the following requirements: a) two completed application forms, b) two recent color passport-size photos, c) passport valid for at least six months, with at least one

blank page, d) fee (cash or postal orders only), and e) letter of invitation or evidence of affiliation by the host institution.

Research Permits and Research Clearance

Please note that Government of Botswana regulations require ALL researchers to have a research clearance prior to conducting any field work. Grantees are encouraged to reconnect with affiliate organizations once the grant has been awarded. Research clearance and permit process can take months to complete, and grantees must begin the process as soon as possible. Researchers/students who do not have research permits risk being denied entry. Obtaining a permit after arrival in country is a long and tedious process and may result in the grantee spending time that cannot be used on research, or in being denied a permit. It is also against government regulations for an individual to change visa status from that of a visitor to that of a researcher.

The Government of Botswana encourages researchers/students to consult with a relevant Ministry/Department, research institution or another relevant body before submitting finalized funding and research proposals. Grantees may seek guidance from the Embassy on which ministries are potential candidates for their research. A copy of the first correspondence outlining the research theme should be sent to the subject Ministry or Ministry of Labour and Home Affairs.

To obtain a resident permit, a researcher or student must meet the following requirements:

- a) Two completed application forms,
- b) Two recent color passport-sized photos,
- c) Passport valid for at least six months, with at least one blank page,
- d) Fee (cash or postal orders only), and
- e) Letter of invitation or evidence of affiliation from the host institution. If the applicant is not affiliated to any institution, the endorsement should come from a person of professional standing in the field of the applicant's discipline, supporting the application and providing assurance that the research will conform to research guidelines.

Two copies of a completed application form for a research permit must be submitted to the relevant ministry, at least four months before commencement of the study. Applications forms may also be downloaded from www.gov.bw/docs/MewtResearch/applicationform.pdf. Forms may also be obtained from any Government Ministry, Embassy of Botswana, High Commission abroad, or the University of Botswana Office of Research and Development. In cases where a research subject overlaps the portfolios of several ministries, researchers are advised to submit their applications through the Ministry of Labour and Home Affairs.

Further details may be found at www.gov.bw/docs/researchguideline.pdf. For specific questions, contact the Educational Attaché, Embassy of the Republic of Botswana, 1531-1533 New Hampshire Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20036; tel; (202) 244-4990/1; fax (202) 244-4264. Guidelines for Botswana research permits and applications forms are on the website of the Embassy of Botswana, Washington, DC, www.botswanaembassy.org, click Botswana Visas.

You may also contact the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Labour and Home Affairs (Research Permits), Private Bag 002, Gaborone, Botswana; tel. (267) 361-1181, or 361-1255, fax (267) 391-3584; pkekopile@gov.bw and ssithole@gov.bw.

Sending and Receiving Mail

Personal mail

Fulbright grantees have been approved for access to the diplomatic pouch to receive first-class letter mail only (maximum of two pounds). Magazines, newspapers, DVDs, and package mail are not authorized. Take sufficient U.S. postage stamps with you for first-class mail to the U.S. The Department of State accepts no liability for loss or damage. First-class mail via the pouch can take up to two weeks or more for delivery. The address format for correspondence is as follows:

Your name (Fulbrighter)
C/o Public Affairs Officer
2170 Gaborone Place
Dulles, VA 20189-2170

Please make sure to have Fulbrighter in brackets following your name as above and indicate care of the Public Affairs Officer. Do NOT write the name of anyone else in the section as C/O.

Books and Educational Materials sent by Diplomatic Pouch

Fulbrighters have access to the diplomatic pouch for sending a maximum of four 8.5"x11" copy paper-size boxes of books and other education materials. These pouch privileges are accorded by the U.S. Embassy on a one-time, one-way basis only; materials cannot be sent back to the U.S. by pouch at any time during your stay. Package mail in excess of the four permitted boxes will be returned to the U.S. at your expense. For additional information on the exact dimensions, address information, and recommendations, consult the *Instructions for Shipment of Books and Educational Materials by Fulbright Scholars* document included in your pre-departure orientation packet.

CAUTIONARY NOTE: In the past, abuse by several Fulbright scholars caused near revocation of privileges for all program participants. Anyone who violates pouch regulations will be barred from use and will have to make other arrangements for handling personal and professional correspondence.

Customs Restrictions on Professional and Personal Affects

Besides the limited pouch shipment and airline excess baggage, grantees may airmail materials addressed to themselves via international mail, but are subject to paying customs duty at the local post office before taking possession of the materials. All goods taken into Botswana must be declared. There are no duties levied on equipment, such as computers, that are imported for personal use. Firearms may not be brought in without prior arrangements with the Department of Customs and the Botswana Police Department. Pets require special handling and prior clearance with the Department of Animal Health before they can be imported into Botswana. Pets brought

in by air must transit Johannesburg; certificates for South Africa are also required. The Community Liaison Office (CLO) at the Embassy can provide additional information. Grantees may register with CLO to receive a weekly internal newsletter to be aware of upcoming Embassy community events.

Schooling for Dependents

There are several international-standard elementary (primary) schools in Gaborone, Francistown, Maun, Jwaneng and Selebi-Phikwe. Yearly tuition runs from \$7,000 to \$9,000. Fulbrighters may request CLO for the latest information on the prospective schools. There are currently several secondary schools for expatriate children in the capital city, although placements are limited and grantees will need to make arrangements in advance in order to be certain their children can be enrolled. Grantees should contact the school's principal or admissions officer directly.

PAS AND EMBASSY SUPPORT

In an effort to support U.S. Fulbright scholars/ students and their families, the following services are provided by PAS and the Embassy:

Security

All Fulbright grantees will receive a security briefing upon arrival in the country. Care should be taken in arranging for a secure apartment, with solid doors and bars on accessible windows. Street petty crime and residential burglaries are an increasing problem in Botswana. Grantees are advised not to walk downtown or in parks after dark, as muggings occur frequently. As in any major U.S. city, people are cautioned to watch valuables at all times. Men should carry wallets in a front trousers pocket; women should carry tightly closed purses held securely to their sides. There are frequent reports of thieves snatching jewelry and other objects from open vehicle windows while stopped in heavy traffic. Carjackings are not uncommon but seem to come in spurts, so use caution, particularly when driving at night. Travelers' checks, passports and other valuables should not be left in a hotel room; check all important documents and valuables in a hotel safety deposit box. Better yet, leave non-essential jewelry and irreplaceable items at home in the U.S.

Use caution when traveling to national parks or nature preserves. Travelers should only use the services of reputable travel firms or knowledgeable guides when traveling safaris or to nature preserves. Safaris are best undertaken with a minimum of two vehicles so that there is a back-up in case of mechanical failure.

Arrival and Temporary Lodging

All grantees will be met and assisted upon arrival. A representative from the University of Botswana, often the department chair, generally meets Fulbright lecturers. The Embassy's PAO or other PAS representative will also be on hand to meet and assist incoming Fulbrighters. Grantees should arrive on weekdays rather than weekends. Grantees must provide CIES or IIE and PAS personnel with their final itineraries at least three weeks in advance of travel.

The University of Botswana provides furnished housing for lecturers and offers them temporary hotel accommodations if permanent housing is not ready when they arrive. University housing is not provided for senior researchers or Fulbright students. Fulbright researchers and students must arrange their own accommodations. If needed, PAS will arrange for temporary hotel accommodations; at the grantee's expense, for a few days until the grantee finds permanent housing.

U.S. Embassy Access

The Embassy in Gaborone does NOT issue Fulbrighters with badges for access to the Embassy; however, a security briefing can be provided. Please arrange to visit the Embassy within one week of your arrival. When you need to visit the Embassy, please let your PAS staff know in advance so they are able to make an access request for you. Advance notice will ease your entry into the Embassy compound.

Check Cashing and Local Banking Arrangements

Visa ATMs are readily available in Gaborone and other cities and towns in the country. Grantees may also open bank accounts at local commercial banks if they have resident permits.

Prior to their departure from the U.S., Fulbrighters should consult their U.S. banks concerning overdraft privileges. When mail is delayed, scholars and students may not have current information about account balances. Additional U.S. dollar travelers' checks and major U.S. credit cards (such as Visa, MasterCard and Diner's Club) are valuable for travel and emergencies. Most retail facilities such as hotels, restaurants, grocery and clothing stores, pharmacies, and gas stations accept credit cards.

Local Health Services and Access to Embassy Health Facilities

Fulbright grantees should ensure they have current yellow fever vaccination and tetanus immunizations. Vaccines for hepatitis A, hepatitis B, typhoid, and current booster vaccines against childhood diseases (tetanus diphtheria, polio, and measles/mumps/rubella) are also strongly recommended for adults, as well as children. For additional information, consult the Centers for Disease Control's website www.cdc.gov/travel

Adequate medical care is available on the local economy. Therefore, Fulbrighters are not granted access to the small Embassy health facility (staffed only by nurses). Gaborone has many clinics, a government referral hospital (Prince Marina Hospital), Gaborone Private Hospital, and the new Bokamoso Hospital (with many American staff). The latter two, although somewhat expensive, are often used by expatriates, including U.S. Embassy personnel. There are a number of private medical practitioners, dental, and optical facilities. Emergency paramedical services are available through Medical Rescue International (MRI). Both the Embassy's Health Unit and the Community Liaison Office have contact lists for recommended medical practitioners and emergency facilities, and will furnish these lists to incoming Fulbright grantees on request.

Grantees should carry copies of complete medical records and basic information that will enable quick and efficient medical assistance, if necessary. Seek the guidance of your personal physician

prior to departure from the U.S. in selecting basic health information records to bring with you. Grantees should carry a good supply of aspirin, vitamins, band-aids, and preferred over the counter medications. Grantees should either bring enough prescription medications to last through their assignment or find out the international name of each prescription, since drug names often differ from those used in the U.S. Prescription medications over the counter drug, first aid supplies, and sundry items can be found in any pharmacy across the country.

Fulbright grantees have health care benefits under the Department of State Group Accident and Sickness Program for Exchanges (ASPE). ASPE is a health benefits program; it is not an all purpose health insurance, and it is subject to limitations. Grantees should review *Accident and Sickness Program for Exchange Participants in Program* Sponsored by the Bureau of *Educational and Cultural Affairs*. Traveler's medical insurance, particularly emergency evacuation coverage is strongly recommended, especially for grantees based outside the capital city. The Fulbright grant provides limited medical and medical evacuation (medevac) coverage for the grantee only. The cost of medical insurance and medevac insurance for dependents must be paid for by the Fulbrighter. Fulbrighters based outside the capital should explore membership in a local medical evacuation service that transports injured or ill members from rural areas to the capital or another city. Fulbrighters are strongly encouraged to provide copies of their medical evacuation coverage documents with PAS in the event of an emergency.

Malaria is a serious problem especially for grantees traveling outside urban areas of the central and northern part of Botswana. Take precautions and be familiar with the symptoms so that you seek treatment early. Proper precautions such as malaria prophylaxis, boiling and filtering water, washing fruits and vegetables, etc., should be taken. Malaria prophylaxis medication is readily available on the local market. Grantees are advised to check with their physicians to ensure that these medications are compatible with other medications that they might be taking.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Permanent Housing and Household Goods

The University of Botswana provides furnished housing for Fulbright lecturers and their families. Fulbright lecturers should communicate with their department heads regarding housing and other facilities.

Fulbright researchers and students are responsible for finding their own housing. Housing in Gaborone can be very expensive. There are private bed-and-breakfast accommodations and furnished service apartments in Gaborone available on a month-to-month arrangement or short-term basis. The Public Affairs Section can provide contact information for these upon request.

Household effects are readily available and inexpensive. Gaborone and other major cities have K-Mart and Wal-Mart-like stores that offer a wide variety of consumer goods. There are several shopping malls and convenience stores in the city. Food is not expensive by U.S. standards and grocery stores are plentiful. In Botswana, water can be safely drunk from the tap.

The television system used in Botswana is PAL. Because the U.S. uses the NTSC system, DVDs brought from the U.S. will not be viewable on locally-acquired TV sets, unless they are multi-system. Satellite television service is widely subscribed to in Botswana and costs about US \$150 per month for a package that includes news, sports and movie channels. Botswana National Television (BTV) offers daily programming. In addition to the two national radio stations, three commercial FM stations offer popular music, news and entertainment, and phone-in talk show programming.

Computers and Other Electronic Equipment

Fulbrighters do not have duty-free privileges, so all computers and electronic equipment brought into the country must be taken out of the country when the grant is completed or duty must be paid. Previous Fulbrighters have donated computer equipment to host universities at the end of their stay in exchange for the university's obtaining duty-free entry. Do not send computers as unaccompanied baggage.

Power outages and power fluctuations are common and can destroy a computer. The best solution is to bring a laptop which does not require a transformer and can easily convert from 120 to 220 volts. Another option is to purchase a transformer to convert your computer from 110 to 220 volts, and a heavy-duty surge protector and voltage regulator. All can be purchased in-country. A previous Fulbrighter also advised that by bringing his own laser printer on his grant, he was able to avoid the tedious process of getting copies made at the university.

Larger cities offer a variety of email and internet service providers at reasonable rates. Direct internet access is available, though a bit more expensive, and is becoming widely used particularly in the NGO and business communities. Unlike the U.S. where the universities were in the forefront of providing internet services, University of Botswana internet service is a slower bandwidth.

Cameras intended for personal use are allowed into the country duty-free.

Academic Life

The University of Botswana (UB) is the country's national institution of higher learning with an enrolment of more than 15,000 students at the undergraduate and graduate levels. The university's website is www.ub.bw.

Academic Calendar

The academic year of the University of Botswana runs from August through May. There are two semesters: August-December and January-May. Fulbright lecturers should plan to arrive in late July or early August. While classes may not actually start on dates scheduled, course assignments - which lecturers will teach - are often decided during the last semester of the previous academic year. Given this, lecturers must be present before classes are scheduled to start.

Teaching Requirements, Attendance, & Staff Hours

Lecturers may be assigned up to four courses, due to staff shortages in various departments. As stated in the Fulbright grant, PAS expects all lecturers to fulfill their professional responsibilities,

including class attendance, faculty meetings, special projects, etc. Lecturers should communicate with their department heads as soon as possible to get some idea of classes to be assigned; however, Fulbright lecturers should also take note of workload assigned to them, and, advice PAS if the host department is unbalanced in assignments.

Phoning Home & Mobile Phones

Use of international long-distance calling cards is very limited. International calling rates are quite high – approximately \$3 to \$4 per minute to call the U.S. Many Americans subscribe to various call-back services to obtain cheaper rates at approximately \$1.20 per minute.

Most Fulbrighters find it impossible to live without a mobile phone. There are three companies - Mascom, Orange and Be Mobile networks. U.S. phones, unless compatible with the GSM900 system, will not be compatible with Botswana's system. Mobile phones purchased in Europe should work.

Local Transportation and the Used Car Market

Fulbrighters who plan to drive should obtain an international driver's license from AAA before leaving the U.S. Japanese vehicles are common in Botswana, and spare parts are easily available. Excessive speed, unpredictable local driving habits, poor vehicle maintenance, and the lack of basic safety equipment on many vehicles are daily hazards. Vehicle travel outside major cities at night should be avoided due to poor road conditions and the threat of banditry. High clearance or four-wheel drive vehicles are essential for driving outside major cities and to game parks. During the rainy season, many roads are passable only with four-wheel drive vehicles.

Fulbrighters are not granted duty-free privileges to purchase or import vehicles, and are advised not to import vehicles, as import duty is very expensive and delays are common in clearing vehicles through customs. The Embassy and PAS cannot assist with customs clearance.

Scholars who plan to drive are advised to look for used vehicle upon arrival in the host country. Prices are high by U.S. standards (\$4,000 or more depending on the type of car), but most grantees can sell the vehicle for approximately the same amount upon departure. Car rental is possible but also expensive. PAS cannot provide official vehicles for personal use. Depending on where you live, it may be possible to call for a taxi, especially if you can identify a reliable driver. Public transportation is safe but not considered efficient. Roads are generally poorly maintained, with numerous potholes even on major thoroughfares. Travel via passenger train is unsafe, particularly during the rainy seasons, because of the lack of routine maintenance and safety checks.

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS IN BOTSWANA

In addition to observing U.S. holidays, the U.S. Embassy also observes Botswana holidays, according to the following holiday schedule for 2012:

****Public Holiday observed** Monday, January 2 US/Botswana
Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday Monday, January 16 US

Washington's Birthday Monday, February 20 US
Good Friday Friday, April 6 Botswana
Easter Monday Monday, April 9 Botswana
Labor Day Tuesday, May 1 Botswana
Memorial Day Monday, May 28 US
Ascension Day Thursday, May 17 Botswana
Sir Seretse Khama Day Friday, July 1 Botswana
Independence Day Monday, July 4 US
President's Day Monday, July 16 Botswana
Public Holiday Tuesday, July 17 Botswana
Labor Day Monday, September 3 US
Botswana Day Friday, September 30 Botswana
Columbus Day Monday, October 8 US
Veterans Day Monday, November 12 US
Thanksgiving Day Thursday, November 22 US
Christmas Day Tuesday, December 25 US/Botswana
Public Holiday Wednesday, December 26 Botswana

**January 1, 2012 (the U.S. legal public holiday for New Year's Day) falls on a Sunday.

FULBRIGHT REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

One of the requirements of the Fulbright award is submission of two reports: 1) at the interim or mid-point of the grant and 2) a final report prior to departing from the host country. Grantees will receive instructions from CIES or IIE, as appropriate, on how to file reports on-line.